



Department of City Development

Mousing Authority
Redevelopment Authority
City Plan Commission
Historic Preservation Commission

November 10, 2004

Scott Hassett, Secretary
State of Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources
101 S. Webster St.
Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

Re: WDNR's Application for EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant for Hazardous Substances

Dear Secretary Hassett,

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM) is pleased to join WDNR in the Wisconsin 30th Street Industrial Corridor Partnership. This partnership is aimed at raising the reinvestment profile, and thus quality of life, in the 30th St. Industrial Corridor. This neighborhood is one of Wisconsin's most economically distressed: With more than a third of families in the area living below poverty, an 18% unemployment rate, the decline over 30 years of neighborhood manufacturing from nearly 40% to less than 15%, and the 230 *known* resulting brownfields, this neighborhood faces enormous challenges in attracting investment that can lead to cleanup and redevelopment.

Feared environmental contamination from former manufacturing uses significantly hinders economic development in this area. When we field requests from businesses looking to relocate to the area, we are frequently asked about the environmental status of various properties. Unfortunately, that information is rarely available and potential investors are unwilling to spend the time and money to find the answer. Instead they often move on to suburban properties without environmental complications. If there is no funding to do assessment, the redevelopment and restoration of the Corridor's economic health is unlikely to occur. EPA's assessment funds provide an exciting opportunity to take a step forward for this neighborhood so we can begin pairing properties with other grant and tax credit programs as well as with individual businesses who can utilize them.

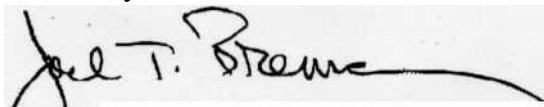
RACM's experience administering EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilot funds and assessment grants gives us a unique ability to assist WDNR in using funds in this neighborhood. We have the ability to secure inspection warrants on tax delinquent parcels, experience in clearing eligibility of sites under community wide assessment

pools, as well as the ability to attract other municipal funding sources such as TIP, block grant funds, cancellation of back taxes and business improvement districts to use in conjunction with assessment funds.

Although RACM is applying separately for assessment funds to use in other parts of Milwaukee, we use those funds for "ready to go" brownfields projects where there is high development potential. In the past our assessment dollars have always been utilized in the Menomonee Valley area or for projects that will likely translate into a redevelopment project within a year or two. Overall needs have far outreached assessment dollars RACM has been awarded. Unfortunately, that has left the 30th St. Industrial Corridor out. RACM has never utilized these funds in the 30th St. area.

We look forward to kicking off this partnership with WDNR and the 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation. It is refreshing to see the partnership focus on environmental justice issues in a concrete and productive way. If the partnership produces successful results we expect WDNR to reproduce similar partnerships in other needy communities in Wisconsin in later years. This is a pioneering partnership in the brownfields field.

Sincerely,



Joel Brennan
Assistant Executive Director- Secretary